

# Partnership Strategy

April 25, 2006



# Existing Conditions

- For the most part, the Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF is older/denser than historic range of variability (HRV)
- Substantial decline in aspen
- Insect risk at substantially higher levels than HRV
- Severe fire risk is elevated
- Legacy of excessive, poorly located and engineered roads, fragmentation, and declines in wildlife security
- High wilderness quality landscapes on forest

# B-D Preferred Alternative

## Alternative 5 proposes:

- Very little suitable timber
- Large of amounts of prescribed burning
- Very modest increases in Wilderness
- Modest road and trail closures for motors

## Rationale:

- Timber is controversial
- Prescribed burning, restoration is not controversial
- Burning/restoration \$ will be forthcoming
- Wilderness is controversial
- Motorized use is controversial (and travel planning to follow)



# Why the Preferred Alternative is Likely to Fail

- Mature, dense lodgepole stands aren't treatable with prescribed fire and large scale prescribed burning isn't politically viable.
- Budgets for prescribed burning/restoration are not likely to increase
- Timber harvest doesn't occur at level that could modify fuels or sustain the local industry
- Insufficient attention to motorized use
- Inadequate consideration of Wilderness values

Conclusion: perpetuates resource use controversies

# **The Partnership recognizes:**

- Road, vegetation, and fisheries restoration are needed
- Timber harvest is controversial
- NEPA/litigation is very expensive
- Appropriated dollars will be limited
- Prescribed burning/wildland fire use are limited as tools
- Timber industry has important role as management tool
- Wilderness quality landscapes need protection

**Unless the Forest plan is effective at addressing these issues  
gridlock is likely to continue.**

# **The Partnership Strategy includes five factors to reduce gridlock**

The needs of major interests (conservation, hunting, fishing, commodity, OHV) will be met:

- The use of Stewardship Contracts assures that vegetative treatments and restoration work have predictable outcomes (“the glue”);
- Sufficient land allocated for timber production;
- Areas with high wilderness attributes are recommended for wilderness;
- Unit NEPA/project costs are reduced,
- \OHV/snowmobile users have sufficient/attractive lands identified where routes/areas can later be designated.

# Key Differences Between the Partnership Strategy and the Preferred Alternative

- **Alternative 5**

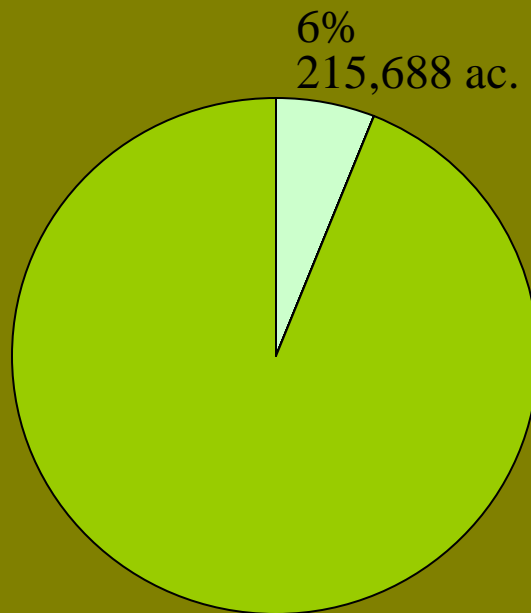
- Vegetative treatments focused on a small part of the Forest
- Vague restoration direction
- Small scale treatments (<250acres); heavy reliance on categorical exclusions
- Inference that logging in unidentified unsuitable could be substantial
- Strong aquatics

- **Partnership Strategy**

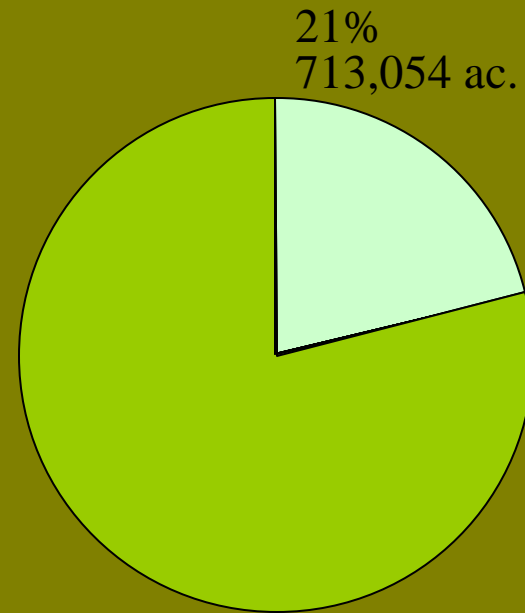
- Clear emphasis on restoration
- Targets restoration to roaded or fragmented landscapes
- 1000-5000 acre landscapes
- No new permanent roads, new roads are temporary, existing permanent reduced to  $\leq 1.5$  mi/sec
- Treatments generally within suitable, in unsuitable would be limited/ WUIs
- Strong aquatics

# Suitable Timber

**Alternative 5**



**Partnership Strategy**

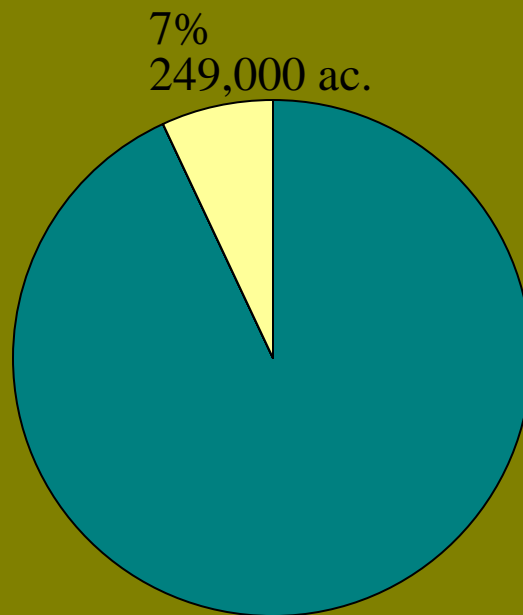


**Partnership anticipates treatment of 1% of suitable /year**

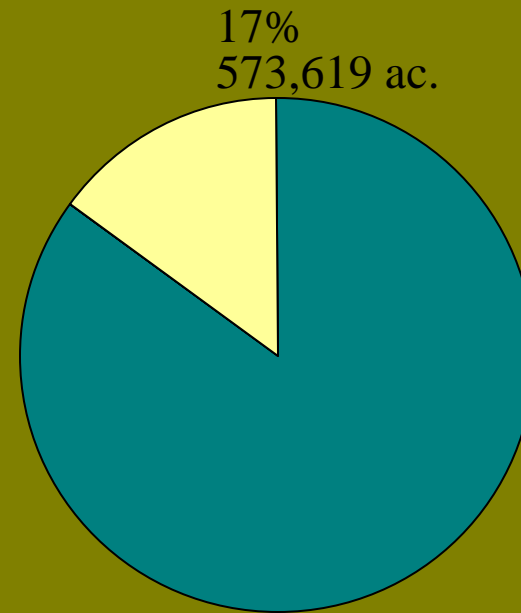


# Recommended New Wilderness

**Alternative 5**



**Partnership Strategy**



**Under Partnership Strategy,  
industry partners will support Wilderness in Congress**

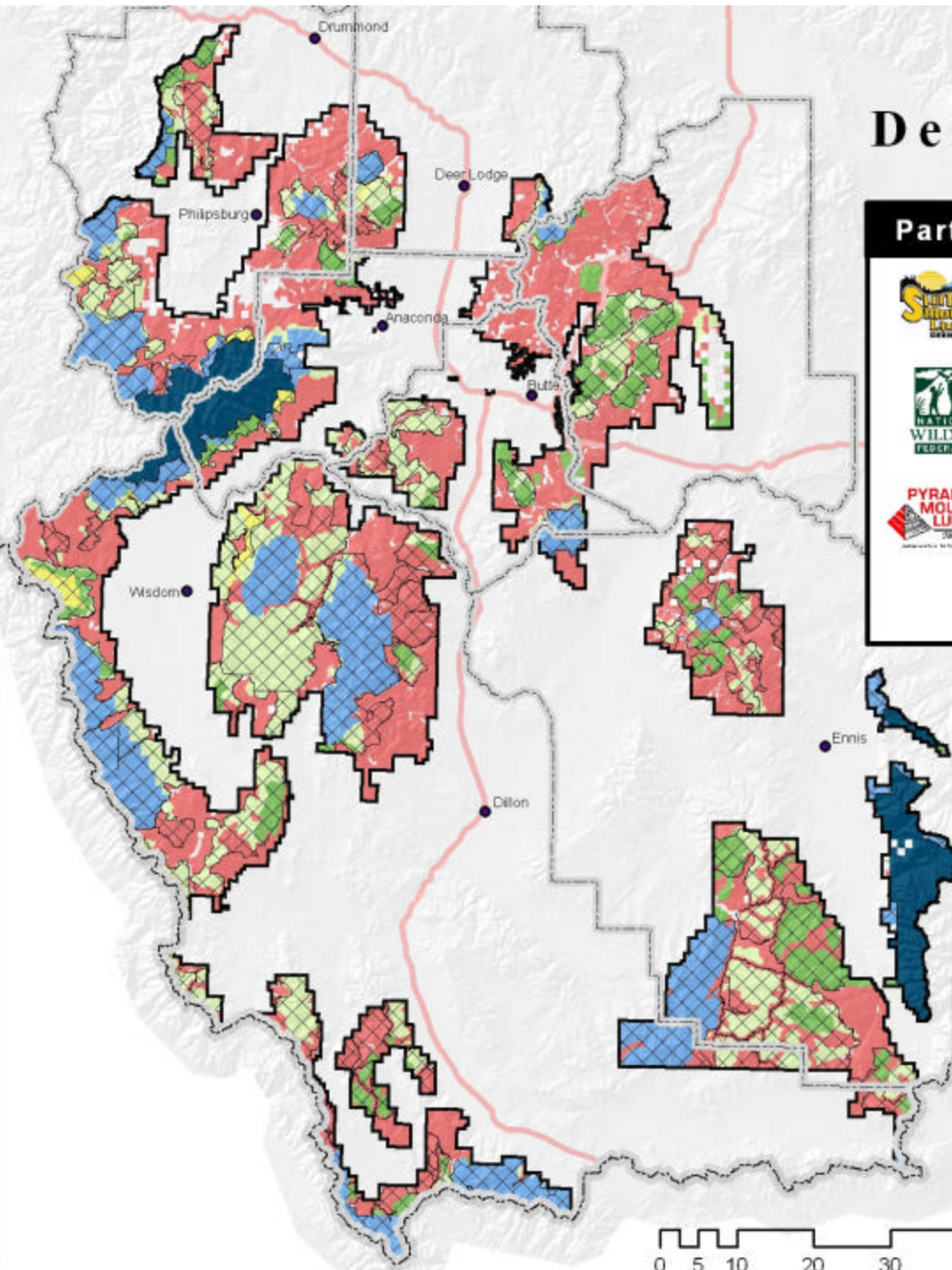
# Land Designation

## Partnership Strategy



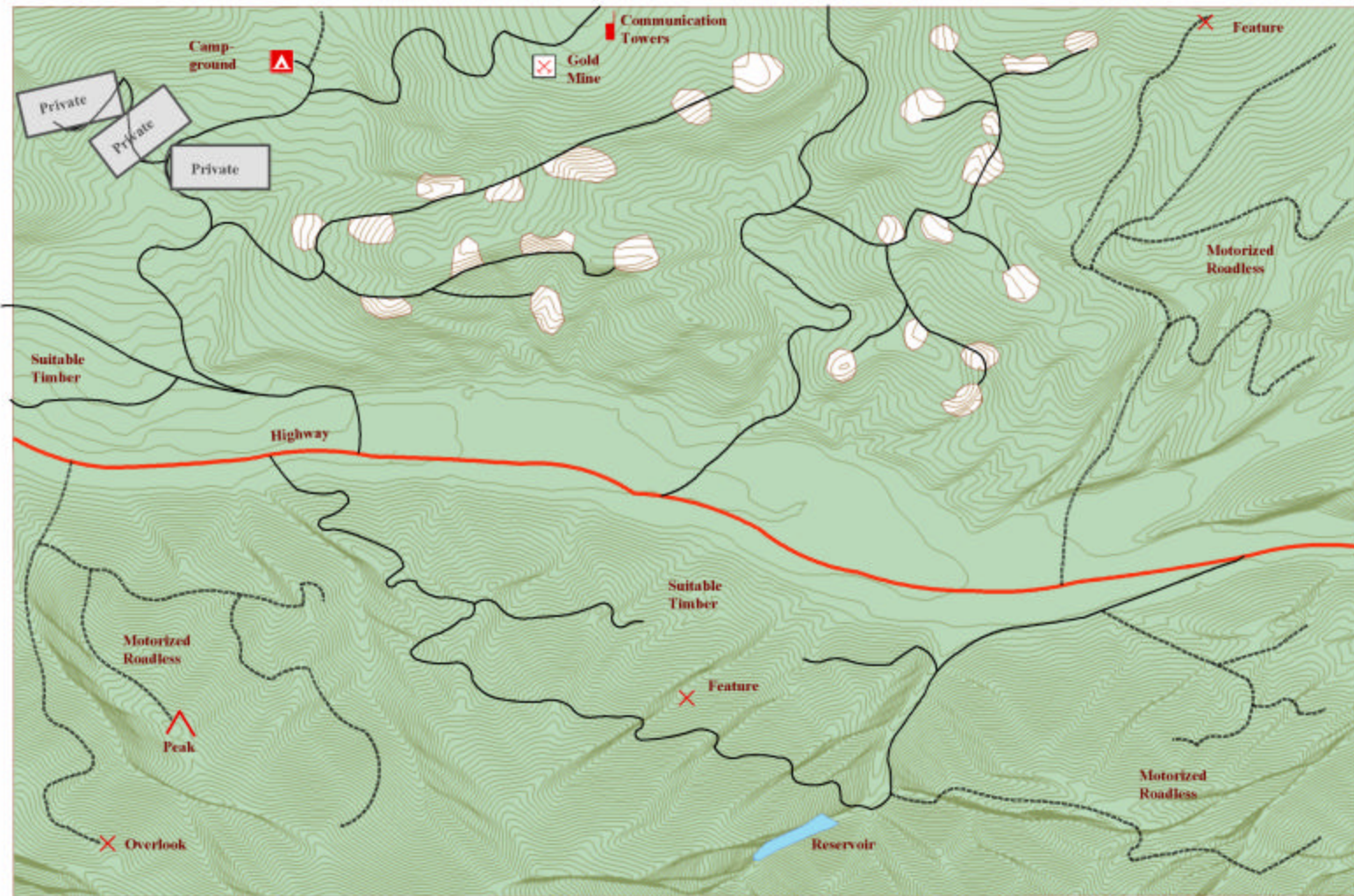
## Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

- Existing Wilderness
- Recommended Wilderness
- Primitive Non-motorized Year-round
- Semi-primitive Non-motorized Year-round
- Semi-primitive Non-motorized Summer
- Motorized
- Inventoried Roadless Area
- Suitable Timber (Displayed as semi-transparent layer across map)
- National Forest Boundary
- County Boundary
- Interstate Highway



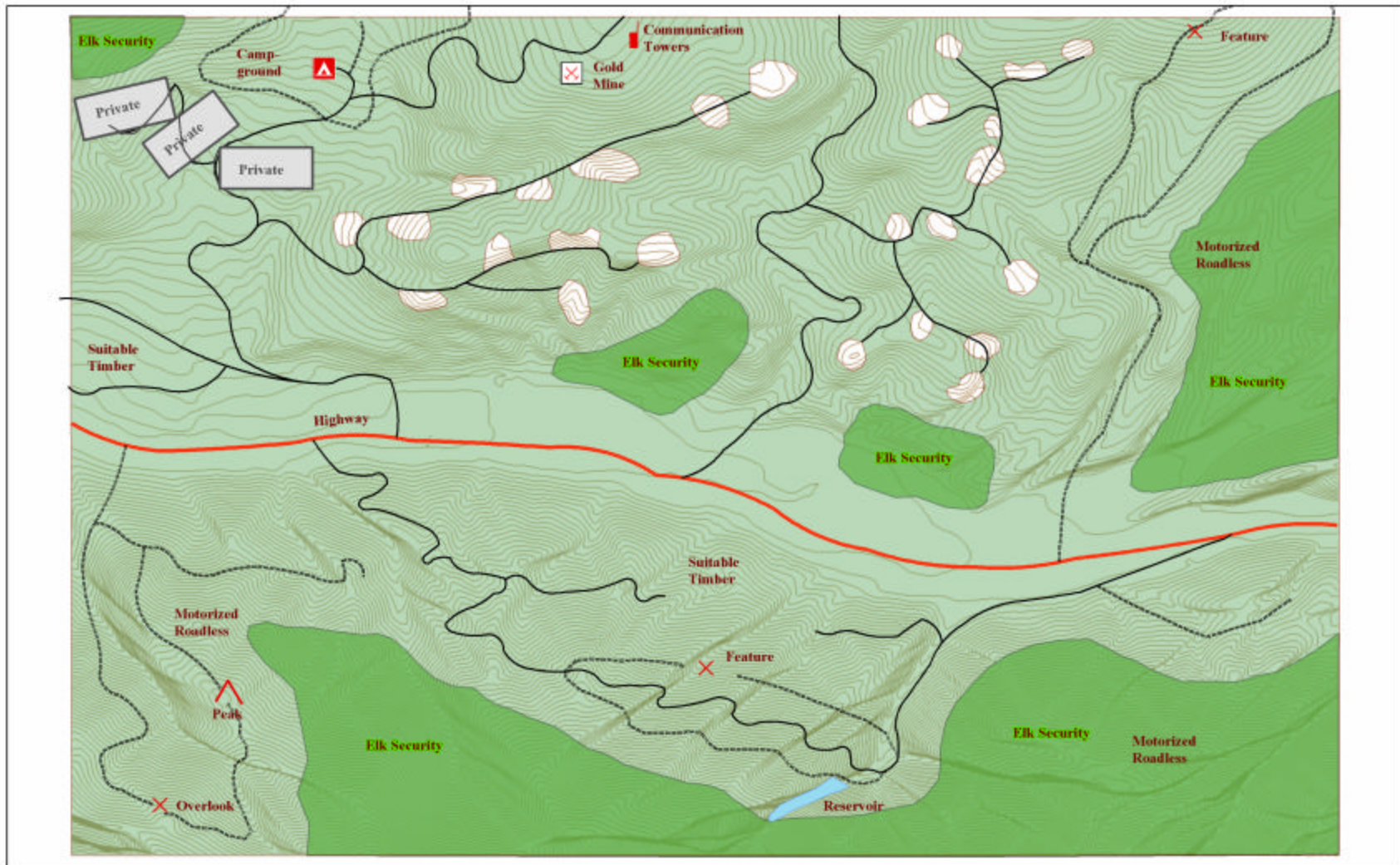
0 5 10 20 30 40 Miles







## Elk Security After Motorized Trail Management 2010

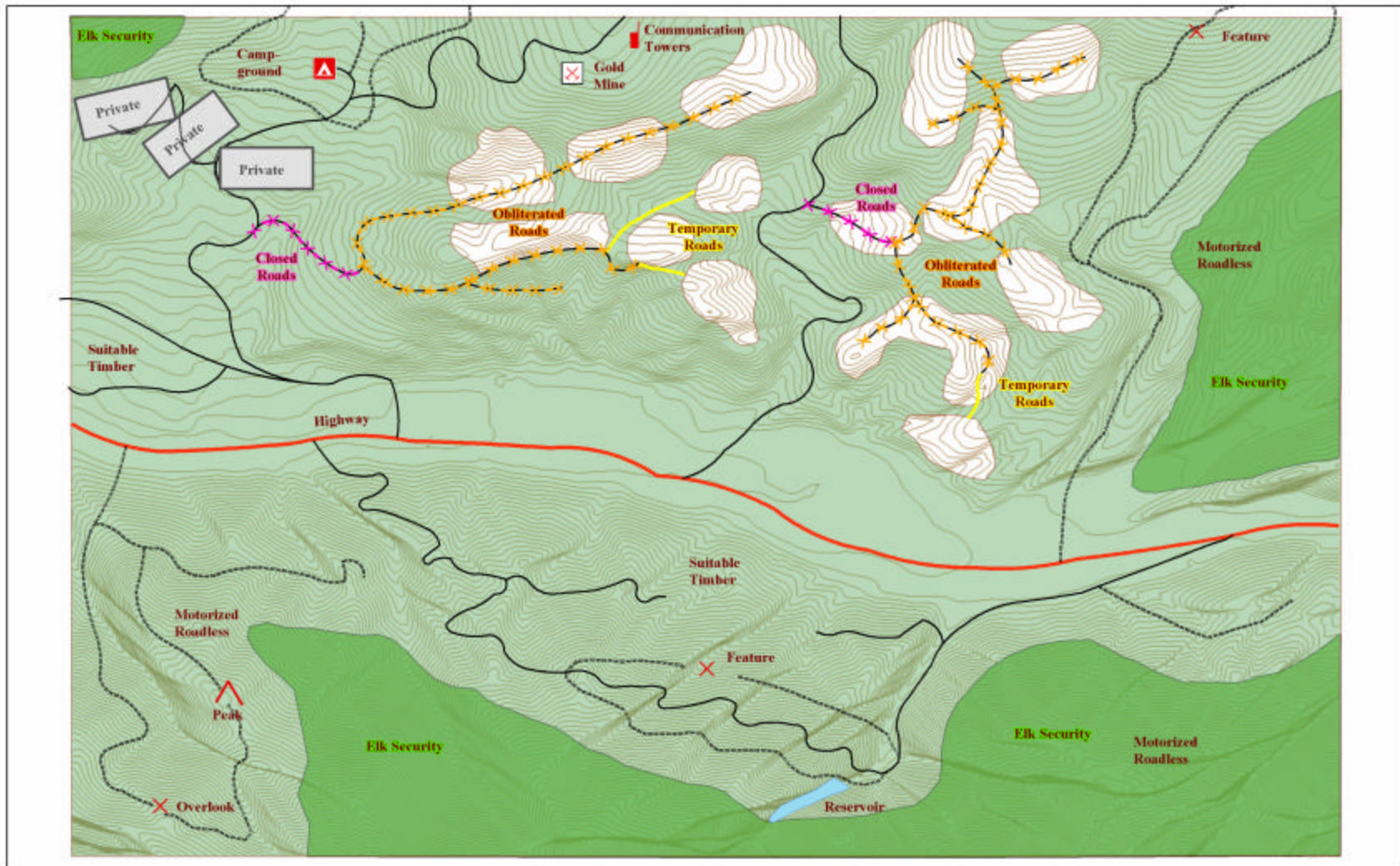


•Some minor losses to potential elk security in newly roaded areas

•Two new large, high quality elk security blocks



# Timber Management 2015

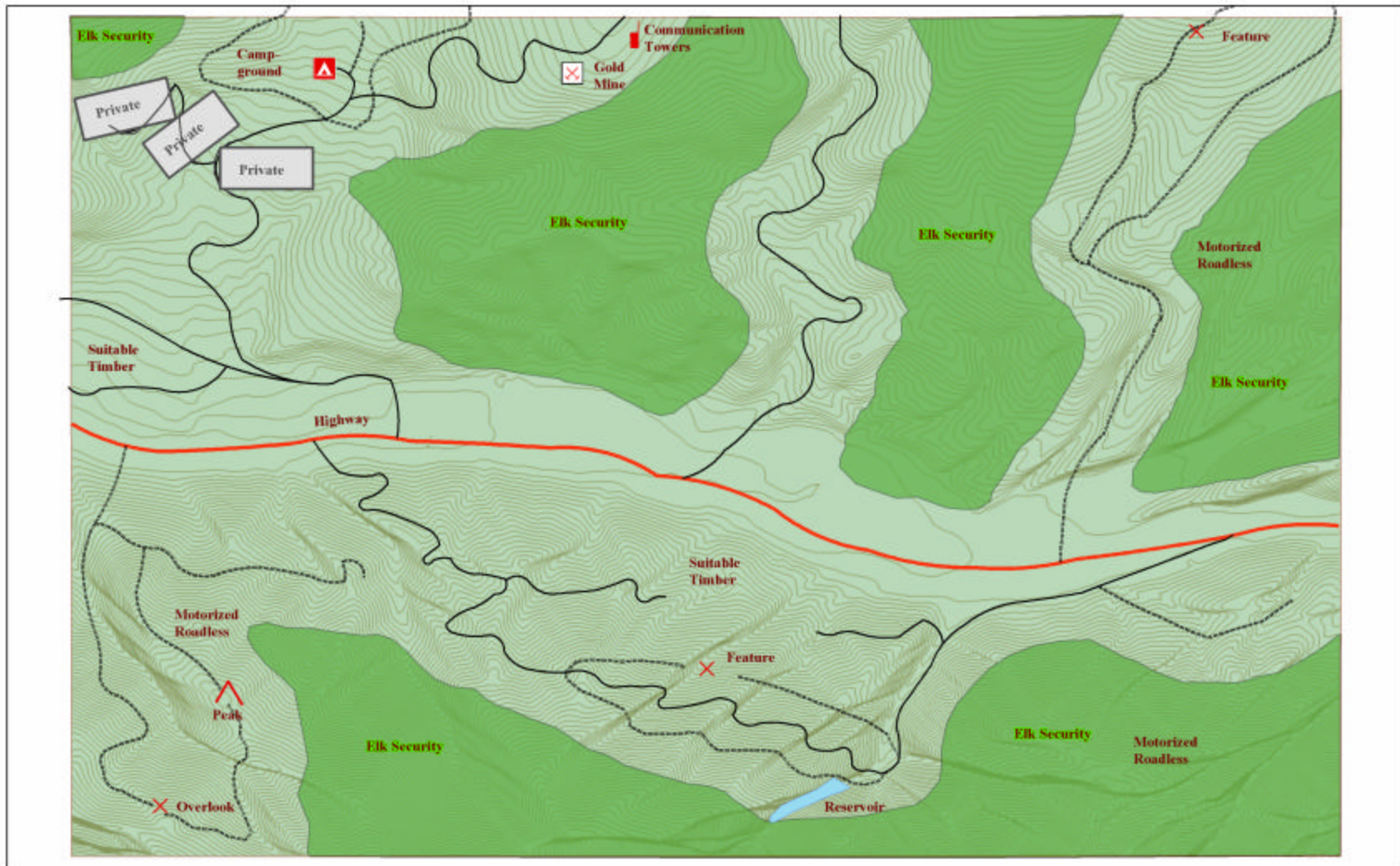


- Re-entry to create larger patch sizes
- Existing roads and concentrated harvest is very economical
  - All new roads will be obliterated following harvest

- Obliteration of most old roads following harvest
  - Obliterates one old road and all new roads
  - Leaves one existing road in place with low elk security potential (paralleling highway)



# Elk Security 2035



- Large 20 year old patches provide excellent elk security
- Road obliteration creates excellent walkways for hunting

- Forest fragmentation reduced

# Road Density per Sq. Mi.



Suitable timber displayed as semi-transparent layer

ANACONDA-PINTLER  
WILDERNESS

## NORTH BIG HOLE BEFORE

1:100,000

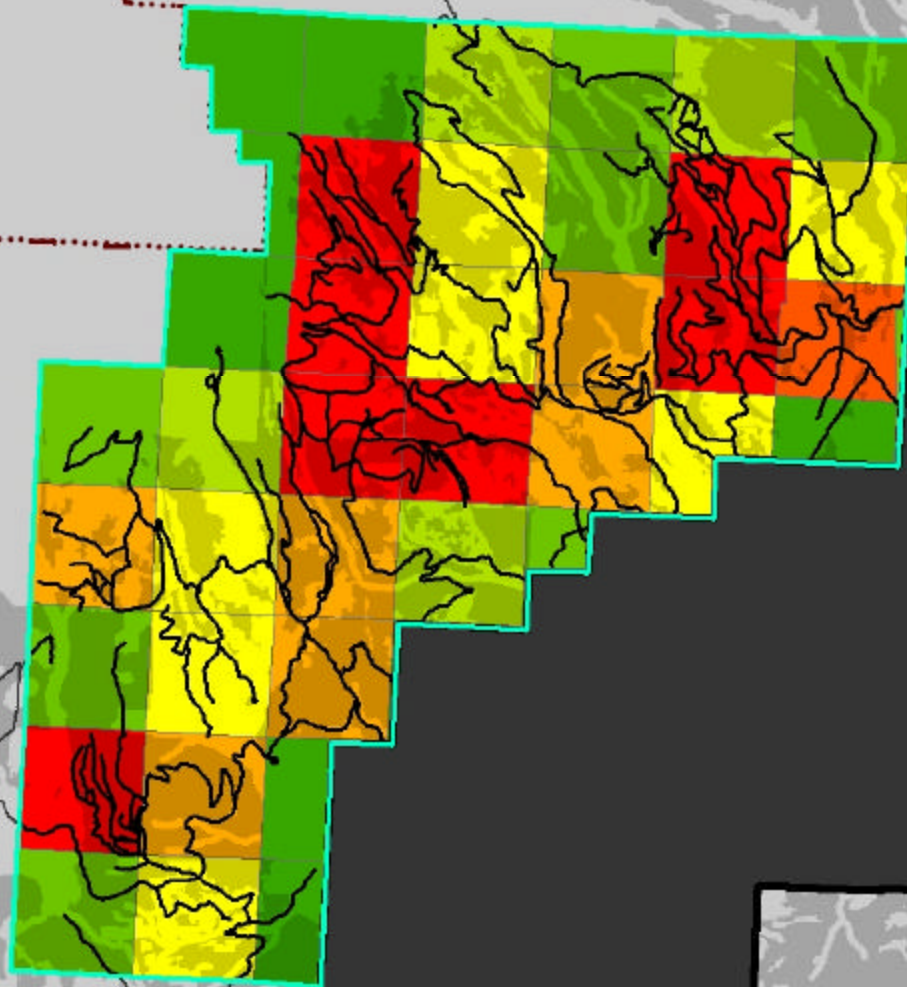
### STATISTICS

Area: 23,044 acres  
Square Miles: 36

Suitable Timber: 9,240 acres

Roads: 128 miles  
Avg. Roads per Sq. Mi.: 3.6

FOCUS AREA





Road Density per Sq. Mi.



Suitable timber displayed  
as semi-transparent layer

# NORTH BIG HOLE AFTER

1:100,000

ANACONDA-PINTLER  
WILDERNESS

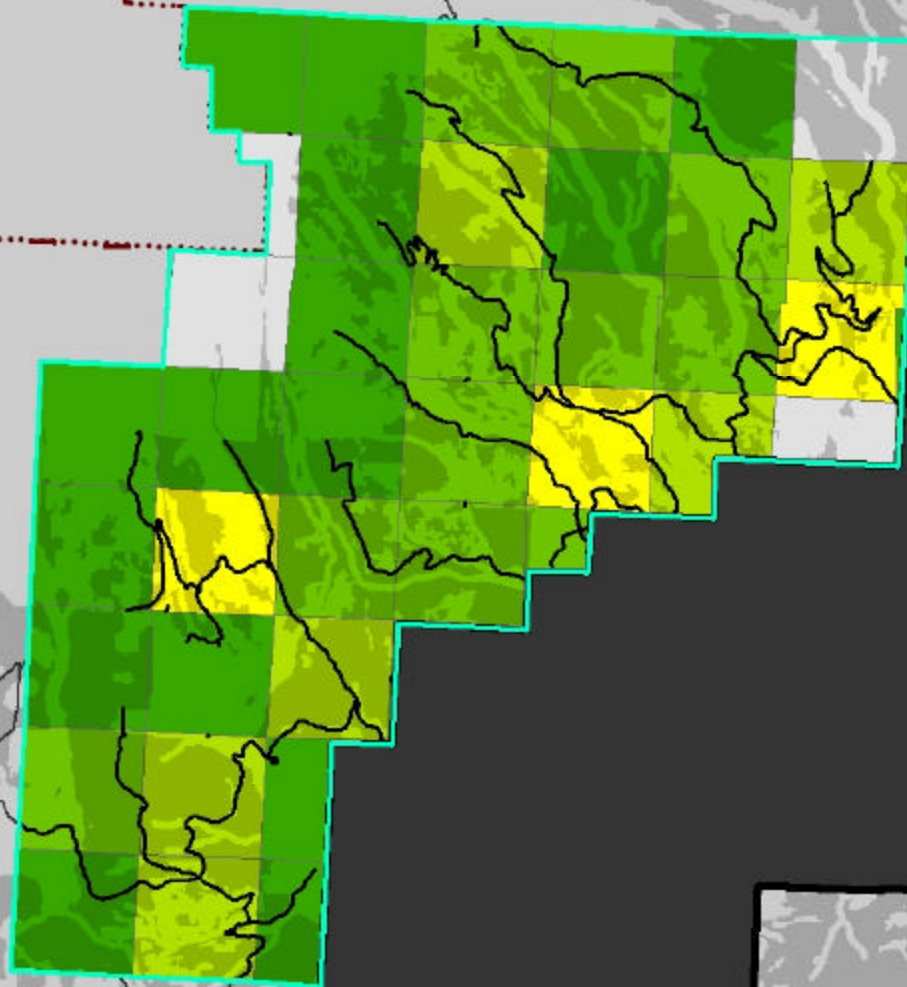
## STATISTICS

Area: 23,044 acres  
Square Miles: 36

Suitable Timber: 9,240 acres

Roads: 49 miles  
Avg. Roads per Sq. Mi.: 1.4

FOCUS AREA



# **The “Economics” of Stewardship Contracting: The Clearwater Stewardship Example**

- 5 million board feet harvested – the “goods”, produced about \$900,000 available for “services” including road reclamation, watershed projects, and campground development.

# **Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF Restoration Projects Backlog**

- 106 projects now outstanding
- Projected cost for all projects = \$3,621,100
- Average project cost = \$3,416
- Range of costs for individual projects = \$675 (Divide Creek Watershed Maintenance) to \$573,750 (Birch Creek Watershed)



## **B-D Road Reclamation**

- In order to meet FWP elk habitat effectiveness goals, approximately 1500 miles of existing roads will need to be reclaimed and restored.
- Road reclamation costs are comparable to road construction costs.
- Road reclamation will cost \$10,000-\$15,000/mile
- B-D road reclamation costs = \$ \$15 million to \$22.5 million

# What next?

- The Forest Service needs to analyze the Partnership Strategy and seek public comment on it.
- **Wilderness legislation needs to be introduced and passed in the next Congress**

**“Are we so accustomed and content to view our national forests as battlegrounds for intractable conflicts that we can’t recognize the path toward peace and prosperity when we see it?”**

*Missoulian* editorial, May 28, 2006